"POWER AFRICA" & PARTNER COUNTRY ENERGY IN THE NEWS

April 30, 2015 – May 29, 2015

Article Summaries & Full Clips

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IN THE NEWS: Featured Partner Country Energy News

April 30, 2015 – May 29, 2015

POWER AFRICA, AFRICA, & REGIONAL NEWS

Singer Akon Launches Academy to 'Harness the Sunshine'

May 21 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

Senegalese-American singer Akon, whose Akon Lighting Africa initiative aims to bring electricity to some of the 600 million Africans who lack it, announced the launch of a new "Solar Academy" for the continent.

1 Billion People Worldwide Lack Access to Electricity, Says World Bank

May 20 | GUARDIAN

The latest report by the World Bank has revealed that about 1.1 billion people in the world still live without electricity supply. The report, tagged "Progress Toward Sustainable Energy: Global Tracking Framework 2015", also stated that although the world is heading in the right direction to achieve universal access to sustainable energy by 2030, it needs to move faster.

Women Mayors Join Forces to Fight for Clean Energy

May 18 | IPS

A group of African women mayors plan to attend the UN Climate Change in Paris this year to make their voices heard on a range of issues, including electrification. The mayors, representing both small and big towns on the continent, are calling for greater attention to communities without electricity, given the inextricable link between climate change and energy.

Technology Key to Narrow Africa's Energy Gap, U.S. Envoy Says

May 14 | Bloomberg

According to Amos Hochstein, Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs at the U.S. State Department, private investment and technological advances are key to boosting power generation in Africa where an estimated 600 million people lack access to electricity. The statements were made at the African Utility Week conference in Cape Town.

Key Africa Power Summit Opens

May 12 | CAJ News Africa

Thousands of attendees from around the globe converged in South Africa for the annual African Utility Week and Clean Power Africa to explore measures of securing the future development of the continent's power and water industries.

U.S $200 Million Staked for Africa's Renewable Energy

May 6 | TIMES OF ZAMBIA

The African Development Bank (AfDB)'s fund portfolio for renewable energies in Africa increased by 10 per cent to US$200 million in the last five years.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia Plans Four New Wind Farm Projects

May 21 | WALTA INFO

As Ethiopia gears to make wind power one of the significant part of the country's renewable energy sources, four new wind farm power projects totaling 542 megawatts of energy are to be constructed in the coming years.

Ethiopia Inaugurates Wind Farm With 153 MWs Featured

May 21 | WALTA INFO

Adama II Wind Farm, which is capable of generating 153 megawatts electricity, was inaugurated.

Renewable Energy Sector Integrating Academic Institutions With Dev't Organizations

May 19 | ETHIOPIAN HERALD

The expansion of renewable wind powered generation in addition to supplying power to the grid, could create opportunities for scientific endeavours to local universities engaged in scientific and technological researches.

Ethiopia's Electric Power Coverage Reaches 55 Per Cent
May 15 | WALTA INFO
The Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) said that electric power coverage in Ethiopia has now reached 55 per cent from only 17 per cent 24 years back.

Increasing Power Supply Pumping a Lifeblood Into the Industry Sector - Eep
May 15 | ETHIOPIAN HERALD
The Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) said that as adequate electricity supply highly contributes to the crystallization of the sought-for leap that puts industrialization at the driver's seat and sustainable economic growth, the government over the last two decades, has been making significant strides in bringing into play mega power generation projects to meet the pressing demand for electricity.

Ethiopia to Step Up Role As Regional Clean Power Exporter
May 13 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION
Ethiopia plans to begin exporting renewable energy to a broader range of neighboring nations by 2018 as part of a cross-border effort to meet regional energy demand and limit increases in climate-changing emissions.

GHANA

CIF Lauds Ghana's Renewable Energy Plan
May 19 | GHANAIAN CHRONICLE
The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) unanimously endorsed Ghana's ambitious investment plan to transform and promote its renewable energy sector.

Plant Reopens to Improve Ghana Power Supply
May 04 | CAJ NEWS
Ghana's power problems are set to ease after the completion of requisite work at the Atuabo Gas Processing Plant.

KENYA

Cost of Connecting Power Now Sh15,000
May 28 | THE STAR
The cost of installing electricity has dropped from Sh35,000 to Sh15,000, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced.

ERC Targets Lowering Domestic Electricity Waste
May 22 | THE STAR
Manufactures of electrical equipment for the Kenyan market will soon have to comply with new energy saving regulations or be locked out.

UNEP to Establish Geothermal Centre of Excellence in Kenya
May 20 | CAPITAL FM
The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is considering establishing an African regional geothermal hub in Kenya to be used as a centre of excellence for the rest of the world.

Kenya Power Wants Local Materials for Major Project
May 4 | THE STAR
Kenya Power wants to reduce the number of imported items it uses for power infrastructure, calling on local manufacturers to tender for supply of materials for the Last Mile Connectivity project.

Solar Panels for Trees? Kenya Barters to Rebuild Its Forests
April 29 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION
In an effort to reverse tree losses in the Nyeri Forest, an environmental initiative has turned to an unusual barter system, offering chickens, goats or solar panels in exchange for tree planting.

LIBERIA

After Ebola, Liberia's Mt. Coffee Rehab Set to Commence
May 27 | FRONTPAGEAFRICA
Recent reports suggest that the Liberian government is looking after their interests related to their major development goals, making sure that their priority investments are properly managed and moved forward.

JICA to Resume Work On LEC Plant
May 19 | LINA
Acting Japanese Foreign Minister B. Elias Shoniyin has disclosed a request from Liberia to consider the return of contractors to resume work on the 10 megawatt power

plant for the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC).

NIGERIA

Jonathan Signs Contentious Bill to Double Power Sector Watchdogs
May 29 | THIS DAY
President Goodluck Jonathan has finally appended his signature on the controversial Nigerian Electricity Management Services Authority (NEMSA) bill to now make for two regulatory controlling affairs in Nigeria's power sector.

FG Battles to Re-Start Grid, As Electricity Blackout Continues
May 27 | DAILY TRUST
A team of engineers are still battling to re-start the National Electricity Grid at the Control Centre in Osogbo, Osun State after a near shut down.

Nigeria's First 10 Megawatt Katsina Windfarm Nears Completion
May 12 | THIS DAY
Nigeria's first ever wind farm, the 10 megawatts (MW) Katsina windfarm is a couple of fractions of work from being completed and commissioned.

Nigeria's Power Generation Drops to 2,800 Megawatts
May 1 | PREMIUM TIMES
Nigeria's total electricity generation has dropped to a meagre 2,800 Megawatts, the lowest in nearly a year, as Nigerians struggle with mini-heat waves due to rising temperature.

NERC, Consumers Plan Electricity Advocacy Network
April 30 | DAILY TRUST
The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has unveiled a framework to create an electricity consumers' advocacy group in the electricity value chain.

TANZANIA

TANESCO Welcome Rivals in Power Distribution
May 26 | DAILY NEWS
The private sector is welcome to compete with state owned Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO) in both generation and distribution of electricity in the country. Tanesco Director General, Felchesmi Mramba said in Dar es Salaam last week while officiating at a World Bank funded Mapping of solar and wind energy in Tanzania media briefing that the 2008 Electricity Act allows private investors to compete with the state power corporation in all areas.

REA Mulls Power to 1.2 Million Rural Residents By 2020
May 25 | DAILY NEWS
The Rural Energy Agency (REA) envisages supplying 1,250,000 rural dwellers with electricity in the next five years, thanks to about 900bn/- that the government has set aside to support the grand project.

Tanesco Mulls More Renewable Energy Projects
May 25 | DAILY NEWS
Renewable energy remains the most reliable and sustainable for the future after current traditional energy sources such as coal, oil and natural gas are depleted, hence Tanesco's drawing up strategies to adopt them.

AfDB to Finance Power Sector Reforms
May 22 | DAILY NEWS
The African Development Bank (AfDB) Board of Directors has approved more than 70 million US dollars (about 141bn/-) in a soft loan to finance the Tanzania Power Sector Reforms and Governance Support Programme (PSRGSP).

IN THE NEWS - Full Clips

April 30, 2015 – May 29, 2015

1. Africa: 1 Billion People Worldwide Lack Access to Electricity, Says World Bank | May 20 | The Guardian
2. Africa: Key Africa Power Summit Opens | May 12 | CAJ News Africa
3. Africa: Singer Akon Launches Academy to 'Harness the Sunshine' | May 21 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION
4. Africa: Technology Key to Narrow Africa's Energy Gap, U.S. Envoy Says | May 14 | Bloomberg
5. Africa: U.S $200 Million Staked for Africa's Renewable Energy | May 6 | TIMES OF ZAMBIA
6. Africa: Women Mayors Join Forces to Fight for Clean Energy | May 18 | IPS
7. Ethiopia: Ethiopia Inaugurates Wind Farm With 153 MWs Featured | May 21 | WALTA INFO
8. Ethiopia: Ethiopia Plans Four New Wind Farm Projects | May 21 | WALTA INFO
9. Ethiopia: Ethiopia to Step Up Role As Regional Clean Power Exporter | May 13 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION
10. Ethiopia: Ethiopia's Electric Power Coverage Reaches 55 Per Cent | May 15 | WALTA INFO
11. Ethiopia: Increasing Power Supply Pumping a Lifeblood Into the Industry Sector – Eep | May 15 | ETHIOPIAN HERALD
12. Ethiopia: Renewable Energy Sector Integrating Academic Institutions With Dev't Organizations | May 19 | ETHIOPIAN HERALD
13. Ghana: CIF Lauds Ghana's Renewable Energy Plan | May 19 | GHANAIAN CHRONICLE
14. Ghana: Plant Reopens to Improve Ghana Power Supply | May 04 | CAJ NEWS
15. Kenya: Kenya Power Wants Local Materials for Major Project | May 4 | THE STAR
16. Kenya: Cost of Connecting Power Now Sh15,000 | May 28 | THE STAR
17. Kenya ERC Targets Lowering Domestic Electricity Waste |May 22 | THE STAR
18. Kenya: Solar Panels for Trees? Kenya Barters to Rebuild Its Forests | April 29 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION
19. Kenya: UNEP to Establish Geothermal Centre of Excellence in Kenya | May 20 | CAPITAL FM
20. Liberia: After Ebola, Liberia's Mt. Coffee Rehab Set to Commence | May 27 | FRONTPAGEAFRICA
21. Liberia: JICA to Resume Work On LEC Plant | May 19 | LINA
22. Nigeria: Nigeria's First 10 Megawatt Katsina Windfarm Nears Completion | May 12 | THIS DAY
23. Nigeria: Nigeria's Power Generation Drops to 2,800 Megawatts | May 1 | PREMIUM TIMES
24. Nigeria: FG Battles to Re-Start Grid, As Electricity Blackout Continues | May 27 | DAILY TRUST
25. Nigeria: Jonathan Signs Contentious Bill to Double Power Sector Watchdogs | May 29 | THIS DAY
26. Nigeria: NERC, Consumers Plan Electricity Advocacy Network | April 30 | DAILY TRUST
27. Tanzania: AfDB to Finance Power Sector Reforms | May 22 | DAILY NEWS
28. Tanzania: REA Mulls Power to 1.2 Million Rural Residents By 2020 | May 25 | DAILY NEWS

29. Tanzania: Tanesco Mulls More Renewable Energy Projects | May 25 | DAILY NEWS
30. Tanzania: TANESCO Welcome Rivals in Power Distribution | May 26 | DAILY NEWS

Africa: 1 Billion People Worldwide Lack Access to Electricity, Says World Bank | May 20 | The Guardian

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505201239.html

By Sulaimon Salau

The latest report by the World Bank has revealed that about 1.1 billion people in the world still live without electricity supply. The report, tagged "Progress Toward Sustainable Energy: Global Tracking Framework 2015", also stated that although the world is heading in the right direction to achieve universal access to sustainable energy by 2030, it needs to move faster.

The World Bank however linked the progress to developments in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia which occurs mainly in urban areas.

The report also said almost 3 billion still cook using polluting fuels like kerosene, wood, charcoal and dung. While picking up steam, it urged that renewable energy generation and energy efficiency improvements will need to accelerate dramatically.

The report is the second in a series that tracks the world's progress toward SE4All's three goals of universal energy access, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix - all to be met by 2030.

While the first edition, released in 2013, measured progress between 1990 and 2010, this edition focuses on 2010 to 2012.

"In that two-year period, the number of people without access to electricity declined from 1.2 billion to 1.1 billion, a rate of progress much faster than the 1990-2010 period. In total 222 million people gained access to electricity during this period, higher than the population increase of 138 million people.

" It stated However, the global electrification rate increased from 83 per cent in 2010 to 85 per cent in 2012.

But there was less progress on access to clean cooking fuel with 2.9 billion people still using biomass fuels like wood and dung. Most of this population clustered in rural areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and eastern Asia.

On the positive side, it noted that the share of modern renewable energy (from sources including hydro, solar and wind energy) grew rapidly at four per cent a year during the tracking period. "Modern renewables made up 8.8 percent of total global energy consumption in 2012.

Still, to meet the 2030 SE4All objective, the annual growth rate for renewable energy needs to be closer to 7.5 percent," he said.

Senior Director of the World Bank's Energy and Extractives Global Practice, Anita Marigold George: "We are heading in the right direction to end energy poverty, but we are still far from the finish line.

We will need to work a lot harder especially to mobilize much larger investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Leveraging public finance to mobilize private capital is imperative in achieving this goal," The report makes key recommendations for global policymakers and stakeholders, including: tripling energy investments from the current level.

It added that annual global investments in energy will need to scale up from roughly $400 billion at present to $1trillion-$1.25 trillion.

Of that, between $40 billion and $100 billion annually is needed to achieve universal access to electricity. Universal access to modern cooking fuels, by contrast, requires just $4.3 billion a year.

Besides, adoption of modern methods of measuring energy access is another important factor, adding that traditional measures of energy access, such as presence of a household electricity connection, mask vast differences in the quality of energy services.

Countries with lower capacity will need access to state-of-the-art clean energy technology and associated knowledge, as well as transfer of knowledge and technology for sustainable energy.

Also, the. Countries are enjoined to address the linkages between energy and other development sectors.

"Energy is closely linked to other sectors of key importance to global development, including water, agriculture, gender and health. Better understanding these linkages will be critical to achieving SE4All and other development goals.

For example, using water more efficiently often cuts electricity consumption, as lower water demand reduces the need for pumping and treating water; water efficiency is also energy efficiency,"

Africa: Key Africa Power Summit Opens | May 12 | CAJ News Africa

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505120322.html

By Mthulisi Sibanda

Cape Town — THOUSANDS of attendees from around the globe have converged in South Africa for the annual African Utility Week and Clean Power Africa to explore measures of securing the future development of the continent's power and water industries.

The event, said to be the biggest such gathering in the sectors in the continent, has resumed at the Cape Town International Conference Centre, where it will run until Thursday.

Scheduled to attract some 5 000 attendees, the event will feature 250 exhibitors, 190 speakers, eight conferences, free technical as well as three high-profile plenary sessions.

An awards dinner scheduled for Wednesday evening is among the highlights of the 15th edition of the African Utility Week and Clean Power Africa as is the Utility CEO Forum that executives from countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Namibia, Ghana, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe will attend.

According to organisers, it is the only African forum where C-level executives from Africa's leading utilities come together to discuss pressing topics within the industry and to accelerate cross-border collaboration, development plans and the advancement of regional centres of excellence throughout Africa.

On Tuesday, Brian Molefe, the newly-appointed Chief Executive Officer of Eskom, the host country's power utility, will deliver the keynote address.

Molefe, on the back of a successful spell at Transnet, has been tasked to turn the fortunes of the beleaguered power firm around after months of negative press.

"The industry has welcomed the appointment of Mr Molefe during a challenging time in the sector and we are honoured that he has chosen African Utility Week to share his vision for our energy future," says event director, Evan Schiff.

"We also look forward to welcoming some 5 000 power and water professionals to our conference and exhibition and turn the Mother City into Africa's energy capital for this week."

Power Africa, United States President Barack Obama's initiative to improve access to power in sub-Saharan Africa, is the official country partner of the conference and expo.

Power Africa works with African governments, the private sector, and other partners to add more than 30 000 megawatts (MW) of cleaner, more efficient electricity generation capacity as well as increase electricity access by adding 60 million new home and business connections throughout all of sub-Saharan Africa.

Andrew Herscowitz, Coordinator for Power Africa, says Cape Town was a befitting venue as Obama launched the initiative in the coastal city almost two years ago.

"We are excited to participate and engage with thousands of power professionals from around the continent gathering at African Utility Week to discuss their shared challenges and how they can work together to improve the way Africans live and work. We look forward to continuing to be part of this on-going conversation and making a difference in the African power sector," says Herscowitz.

Spintelligent, the leading Cape Town-based trade exhibition and conference organiser, and the African office of Clarion Events Ltd, based in the United Kingdom, are organising the African Utility Week and Clean Power Africa.

Africa: Singer Akon Launches Academy to 'Harness the Sunshine' | May 21 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505220980.html

By Joseph d'Urso

London — Senegalese-American singer Akon, whose Akon Lighting Africa initiative aims to bring electricity to some of the 600 million Africans who lack it, announced on Thursday the launch of a new "Solar Academy" for the continent.

The institution, scheduled to open this summer in Bamako, Mali's capital, will try to give African engineers and entrepreneurs the skills needed to develop solar power. European experts will help supply training equipment and programmes.

The academy will aim to teach people how to install and maintain solar-powered electricity systems as well as micro grids, "which are really taking off in rural Africa", Akon Lighting Africa said.

Africa has 320 days of sunshine a year, the organisation said in a statement, so harnessing solar energy is an ideal way to enable those without electricity to get it.

"We have the sun and innovative technologies to bring electricity to homes and communities. We now need to consolidate African expertise," said Samba Baithily, who founded Akon Lighting Africa with Akon and Thione Niang.

Seventy percent of Africans are under 35, and creating sustainable jobs is vital, the group said, so investing in solar power for the future can help in more ways than one.

"We expect the Africans who graduate from this centre to devise new, innovative, technical solutions," said Niang. "With this Academy, we can capitalize on Akon Lighting Africa and go further."

The group announced the launch of the academy at the second United Nations Sustainable Energy for All Forum in New York.

- Reporting By Joseph D'Urso; Editing by Tim Pearce

Africa: Technology Key to Narrow Africa's Energy Gap, U.S. Envoy Says | May 14 | Bloomberg

Source URL: http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-05-14/technology-key-to-narrow-africa-s-energy-gap-u-s-envoy-says

Private investment and technological advances are key to boosting power generation in Africa where an estimated 600 million people lack access to electricity, a U.S. envoy said.

"There is not enough money in any government to solve this problem," Amos Hochstein, Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs at the U.S. State Department, said at the African Utility Week conference in Cape Town on Wednesday. "This is not a government problem. The role of the government is to restructure and reform and create an enabling environment for the private sector to come in and operate."

South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana are among countries facing energy deficits, leading to regular blackouts that stifle economic growth. The International Energy Association estimated in a report last year that the world's poorest continent would need an additional $450 billion in investment by 2040 to halve outages and provide universal access in urban areas.

About 95 energy projects worth more than $50 million were under construction in Africa last year, according to a report released in March by accounting firm Deloitte LLP. While more people on the continent are gaining access to electricity, progress isn't fast enough, said Norman Ndaba, power and utilities sector leader at accounting firm EY.

"Africa still produces less than 5 percent of global electricity and that's not tenable," he said in a May 11 interview at the conference. "The demand is there, the supply is there, but there is no market. We can't afford power on the current basis using the current technology. I'm hoping that in the next 10 years there will be a technology breakthrough" that will dramatically drive down costs, he said.

'Revolutionary Time'

New batteries, such as those being offered by Tesla Motors Inc., that can be used to store power generated by solar panels or wind turbines and can increase access to off-grid sources, may prove part of the solution.

"We are in a revolutionary time in energy around the world," Hochstein said. "We have made more progress in energy in the last 10 years that we have in the previous 100 years combined."

The U.S. government is seeking to bolster electricity generation in sub-Saharan Africa by more than 30,000 megawatts through an $8 billion initiative known as Power Africa that has drawn in more than 100 partner companies. Projects to generate more than 4,100 megawatts have reached financial close since the program was first announced by President Barack Obama in 2013.

While six countries -- Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia and Tanzania -- were initially targeted, it's is now being expanded, said Andrew Herscowitz, Power Africa's coordinator.

"We have had teams fanning out all over the continent," he told the conference this week. "We bring a lot of money to the table but Power Africa is not about having the U.S. government build out infrastructure. It's about getting the private sector to build out the infrastructure that's needed."

Africa: U.S $200 Million Staked for Africa's Renewable Energy | May 6 | TIMES OF ZAMBIA

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505061219.html

THE African Development Bank (AfDB)'s fund portfolio for renewable energies in Africa increased by 10 per cent to US$200 million in the last five years.

According to the 2014 report launched by the bank on Monday, the portfolio size multiplied by 10 during the last five years and was now worth more than $200 million.

Most project funding has been implemented by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through AfDB since 2008.

The report said the relatively young portfolio had 28 projects over 30 countries on the continent, according to the 2014.

The AfDB states that the $ 218 million AfDB-GEF portfolio had leveraged more than $ 1.27 billion in co-financing.

The report highlights the diversity of the portfolio: around three-quarters of the total amount is focused on climate change mitigation projects with other projects in land degradation, biodiversity, international waters and others multi-sectoral.

The bank has mobilised funding from three GEF managed trust funds, the GEF Trust Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF).

After the release of the report, AfDB manager of environment and climate change Kurt Lonsway, said on a global scale Africa was not flagged as a major emitter of the green house gases.

To improve the efficiency of the AfDB and GEF project implementation, some challenges related to the length of the project preparation process, institutional arrangements, and sustainability or reporting were also identified in the report. The report further highlighted two key projects which started to be implemented in 2014, the African Climate Technology Finance Centre and network and the African Renewable Energy Fund (AREF).

The US$130 million AREF was launched in March 2014 with the Sustainable Energy Fund and the Global Environment Facility as lead sponsors, each contributing to equity investment.

AREF has so far reviewed 131 deals for a potential renewable energy capacity of 4,000 megawatts.

Africa: Women Mayors Join Forces to Fight for Clean Energy | May 18 | IPS

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505191278.html

By A. D. Mckenzie

Paris — When some 40,000 delegates, including dozens of heads of state, descend on Paris for the United Nations Climate Change Conference later this year, a group of African women mayors plan to be there and make their voices heard on a range of issues, including electrification.

The mayors, representing both small and big towns on the continent, are calling for greater attention to communities without electricity, given the inextricable link between climate change and energy.

"In my commune, only one-fifth of the people have access to electricity, and this of course hampers development," Marie Pascale Mbock Mioumnde, mayor of Nguibassal in Cameroon, told a recent meeting of women mayors in Paris.

Mbock Mioumnde was one of 18 women mayors at last month's meeting, hosted by Paris mayor Anne Hildalgo and France's former environment minister Jean-Louis Borloo, who now heads the Fondation Énergies pour l'Afrique (Energy for Africa Foundation).

Organisers said the meeting was called to highlight Africa's energy challenges in the run-up to COP 21 (the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), which will take place from Nov. 30 to Dec. 11 and which has the French political class scrambling to show its environmental credentials.

Mbock Mioumnde told IPS in an interview that clean, renewable energy was a priority for Africa, and that political leaders were looking at various means of electrification including hydropower and photovoltaic energy and, but not necessarily, wind power - a feature in many parts of France.

"We plan to maintain this contact and this network of women mayors to see what we can accomplish," said Mbock Mioumnde. "As mayors we're closer to the population, and when we work together, there's hope."

Hidalgo, the first woman to hold the office of Paris mayor, said she wanted to support the African representatives' appeal for "sustainable electrification", considering that two-thirds of Africa's population, "particularly the most vulnerable, don't have access to electricity."

Currently president of the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF), Hidalgo said it was essential to find ways to speed up electrification in Africa, using clean technology that respects the environment and the health of citizens.

The mayors meeting in Paris in April also called for the creation of an "African agency devoted to this issue" that would be in charge of implementing the complete electrification of the continent by 2025.

Present at the conference were several representatives of France's big energy companies such as GDF Suez - an indication that France sees a continued business angle for itself - but the gathering also attracted NGOs which have been working independently to set up solar-power installations in various African countries.

"I'm happy that women are organising on this issue. We need solidarity," said Hidalgo, who has been urging Paris residents to become involved in climate action, in a city that has come late to environmental awareness, especially compared with many German and Swiss towns.

"The Climate Change Conference is a decisive summit for the planet's leaders and decision-makers to reach an agreement," Hidalgo stressed.

Climate change issues have an undeniable gender component because women are especially affected by lack of access to clean sources of energy.

Ethiopian-born, Kenya-based scientist Dr Segenet Kelemu, who was a winner of the 2014 L'Oréal-UNESCO Awards for Women in Science, spoke for example of growing up in a rural village in Ethiopia with no electricity, no running water and no indoor plumbing.

"I went out to collect firewood, to fetch water and to take farm produce to market. Somehow, all the back-breaking tasks in Africa are reserved for women and children," she told a reporter.

This gender component was also raised at a meeting May 7-8 in Addis Ababa, where leaders of a dozen African countries agreed on 12 recommendations to improve the regional response to climate change.

The recommendations included increasing local technological research and development; reinforcing infrastructure for renewable energy, transportation and water; and "mainstreaming gender-responsive climate change actions".

The meeting was part of a series of 'Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF)' workshops being convened though June 2015 in Asia, Latin America, the Pacific and the Middle East. The CVF was established to offer a South-South cooperation platform for vulnerable countries to deal with issues of climate change.

In Paris, Hidalgo's approach includes gathering as many stakeholders as possible together to reach consensus before the U.N. summit. With Ignazio Marino, the mayor of Rome, Italy, she also invited mayors of the "capitals and big towns" of the 28 member states of the European Union to a gathering in March.

The mayors, representing some 60 million inhabitants, stressed that the "fight against climate change is a priority for our towns and the well-being of our citizens."

Hidalgo's office is now working on a project to have 1,000 mayors from around the world present at COP 21, a spokesperson told IPS. The stakes are high because the French government wants the summit to be a success, with a new global agreement on combating climate change.

Borloo, who was environment minister in the administration of former president Nicolas Sarkozy, used to advocate for France's "climate justice" proposal, aimed at giving financial aid to poor countries to combat climate change.

Calling for a "climate justice plan" to allow poor countries to "adapt, achieve growth, get out of poverty and have access to energy," Borloo was a key French player at COP 15 in Copenhagen in 2009, but that conference ended in disarray. The question now is: will a greater involvement of women leaders and mayors make COP 21 a success?

Ethiopia: Ethiopia Inaugurates Wind Farm With 153 MWs Featured | May 21 | WALTA INFO

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505211503.html

Addis Ababa — Adama II Wind Farm, which is capable of generating 153 megawatts electricity, was inaugurated yesterday.

This input would increase the 171 MWs electric power obtained from wind to 324 MWs.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Prime Minister Hailemariam Dessalegn said the country is striving to be among the few countries competing in the sector by strengthening its activities in generating renewable energy.

In the project were involved, Adama Science and Technology and Mekele universities.

The government is also ready to seriously involve universities in other similar projects that the country would undertake, the premier said.

He pointed out that the production of big machinery would be carried out locally since the power generation will be huge in the future.

Hailemariam urged the private sector to get organized and engage in this sector that is now handled by the Metal and Engineering Corporation.

Efforts would be exerted to make the country not only self-sufficient in meeting its power needs but also export electricity to neighboring countries in the coming ten years, he noted.

Oromia Regional State Chief Administrator, Muktar Kedir said on his part the project will benefit rural communities that had no access to electricity and also contributes to the plan to integrate neighboring countries with electricity.

Water, Irrigation and Energy Minister, Alemayehu Tegenu stated that reliable and sustainable provision of electric power is one of the crucial inputs to the fast economy growth that the country has been registering.

To fulfill the demand of energy in the country, renewable power generating projects such as hydro, wind, geothermal, solar and dry waste are being used, he indicated.

Ethiopian Electric Power Chief Executive Officer, Azeb Asnake said diverse projects are being executed in order to adequately meet the power demand of the country.

The Adama II Wind Farm Project, which was launched in 2013, cost 345 million USD, it was learned.

Some 85 percent of the cost was covered from loan obtained from China and the remaining sum by Ethiopia.

According to ENA, the wind farm is expected to generate 477 GWs electricity annually.

Ethiopia: Ethiopia Plans Four New Wind Farm Projects | May 21 | WALTA INFO

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505250715.html

Addis Ababa — As Ethiopia gears to make wind power one of the significant part of the country's renewable energy sources, four new wind farm power projects totaling 542 megawats of energy are to be constructed in the coming years, an official said.

The report was released in a booklet during the inauguration of the third wind power to be commissioned over the last three years the 153 MW Adama II Wind farm, 95 kms south east of Addis Ababa. The other two are the 51 MW Adama I wind farm and the 120 MW Ashegoda Wind farm located 780 kms north of Addis Ababa.

The Projects who are under study are the 300 MW Aysha wind farm, the 42 MW Mesebo-Harena wind farm, the 100 MW Assela Wind Farm and the 100 MW Debre Berhan wind farm.

Alemayehu Tegenu Water, Energy and Irrigation Ministry Minister said the inauguration of the Adama II Wind Farm, is part of the government's drive for the concluding Growth, Transformation Plan (GTP) to increase production capacity from 2,000 MW to 10,000 MW by 2015.

The 1870 Gibe III Hydro Dam, which is more than 90 percent complete is expected to see it's two turbines out of ten each with generating capacity of 187 MW will be commissioned next month.

Alemayehu further stated that the development of wind resource is a perfect energy mix and complement with hydro power energy, as well being part of its power export revenue.

Ethiopia has already started exporting power to Djibouti, Sudan and two Kenyan border towns, enabling the country to earn much needed hard currency.

Azeb Asnake CEO of the public utility firm Ethiopian Electricity Power (EEP), stated that the country exhibited a 20 percent annual growth in electricity demand, and as such the government is constructing power projects to cope with the rising demand going further. (newbusinessethiopia.com)

Ethiopia: Ethiopia to Step Up Role As Regional Clean Power Exporter | May 13 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505140581.html

By E.G. Woldegebriel

Addis Ababa — Ethiopia plans to begin exporting renewable energy to a broader range of neighbouring nations by 2018 as part of a cross-border effort to meet regional energy demand and limit increases in climate-changing emissions.

The Eastern African Power Pool (EAPP) initiative aims to create or expand clean energy transmission lines among about a dozen countries in the region. Ethiopia, which has plans to dramatically scale up its production and export of hydroelectricity, would take on a bigger role as a regional power exporter under the plan.

Currently, Ethiopia exports power to parts of Kenya, Sudan and Djibouti, but it has signed deals to send power to Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan and Yemen as well, particularly from hydro-power.

The new $1.8 billion Gilgel Gibe 3 dam on the Omo River is set to begin power production as early as June.

Mekuria Lemma, head of strategy and investment at Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation, the state-owned sole provider of electricity in the country, said the regional power pool aims to boost economic growth in power importing nations, increase Ethiopia's export earnings and bring grid electricity to millions without it.

PUSH AT PARIS?

The clean energy advances could help East Africa push for global cuts in climate-changing emissions at U.N.-led climate talks in Paris this December, said Negash Teklu, executive director of PHE (Population, Health and Environment) Ethiopia, an NGO consortium.

The region faces worsening impacts from climate change, including stronger droughts and more unpredictable planting seasons.

"Even though Ethiopia isn't a big emitter it has been disproportionately affected by climate change," Teklu said.

With many East African nations, including Ethiopia, pushing ahead with renewable energy projects, countries in the region may have a stronger position to call for a goal of zero net carbon emissions by 2050, Teklu said.

NEED FOR POWER

Ethiopia is home to nearly 100 million people, about a quarter of the total population of the Eastern Africa Power Pool region, which would stretch from Egypt in the north to Tanzania in the South, and from the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west to Djibouti in the east.

Just 20 percent of Ethiopians have access to the country's electric grid - a percentage even lower in rural areas. Those without power often cut wood for cooking, increasing deforestation and hurting water availability.

A surge in the use of reliable renewable energy could both provide employment for Ethiopia's large number of young people through small renewable energy businesses and protect the environment, Teklu said.

The government says in its latest Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) that by 2020 it aims to reach 15,000 megawatts of electrical generating capacity, including 1,500 MW from wind energy, 11,000 MW from hydropower, 1,200 MW from geothermal, 300 MW from solar and 600 MW from co-generation.

Currently it has an installed electrical capacity of more than 2,200 megawatts.

The Democratic Republic of Congo also has significant hydropower potential in the region, but that country's political instability and weak infrastructure has meant that Ethiopia is the regional leader in exporting electricity.

DEAL ON THE NILE

In March, the leaders of Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan signed a "declaration of principles" on the use of the Blue Nile - the Nile's main tributary - for a $4.7 billion, 6,000 MW hydropower project Ethiopia is constructing on the river, near the Sudanese border.

The principles call for sharing of data and commit Ethiopia to working to avoid harm from potential changes in water flows to Egypt and Sudan. It also gives first rights to electricity exports from the hydropower plant to those two countries.

Egypt and Sudan, both largely desert nations, depend heavily on the water of river Nile for drinking water, agriculture and industries, and plans to dam the river for power have been hugely controversial.

President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi of Egypt said at the March signing that the dam remains "a source of concern and worry" for Egypt.

But Teklu said that with both Egypt and Sudan facing electricity shortages, exports from Ethiopia could help both nations achieve their development needs more cleanly, while reducing potential future political flashpoints.

"If 12 of us members of EAPP sit down and agree on fair distribution of electricity needs it can support and compliment each country's development initiative, contribute to regional unity" he said.

"Energy integration has happened before in the European Union, different states of the United States and parts of Asia, so there is no reason EAPP's goals can't be met while addressing climate concerns," Teklu said. (Reporting by E.G. Woldegebriel; editing by Laurie Goering)

Ethiopia: Ethiopia's Electric Power Coverage Reaches 55 Per Cent | May 15 | WALTA INFO

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505180537.html

Addis Ababa — The Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) said that electric power coverage in Ethiopia has now reached 55 per cent from only 17 per cent 24 years back.

EEP External Public Relations Director, Miskir Negash, told WIC today that the coverage rose significantly during the past years owing to the due attention given by the ruling party- The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF).

"Ethiopia's current power production stands at around 2,313MW from 370MW in 1983 EC, ensuring that 55 per cent of the country is covered with electric power," he said.

The number of electrified towns and rural villages also increased to over 5,300 from less than 648 some 24 years ago, Miskir said.

The total length of high voltage transmission lines has increased to 13, 000 km from 3,578 km, while the number of power substations rose to 162 from 82, he said.

In order to meet the increasing demand for power, a number of billions of birr projects are being executed in various parts of the country, Misikr indicated.

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) with installed capacity of 6,000MW and the Gibe III with installed capacity of 1,870MW are the two main hydropower projects being carried out to fulfill the increasing demand, he said.

According to Misikr, Gibe III being built along Ethiopia's Omo River will begin generating power next month.

Genale Dawa III hydro power project with a generating capacity of 254 MW, Adama II wind farm project with a generating capacity of 153 MW and Aluto geothermal power project with 70 MW generation capacity are also the hydropower projects being executed by the government.

Asked about the cause of the current power interruption in the country, he said the problem occurs not because of power shortage rather due to transmission and distribution as well as the failure of old transformers.

However, efforts are underway to minimize the problem and enhance the capacity of transmission lines, he said.

Ethiopia has a potential to produce over 60,000 MW from renewable natural energy resources.

Ethiopia: Increasing Power Supply Pumping a Lifeblood Into the Industry Sector – Eep | May 15 | ETHIOPIAN HERALD

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505180616.html

By Desta Gebre-Hiwot

The Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) said that as adequate electricity supply highly contributes to the crystallization of the sought-for leap that puts industrialization at the driver's seat and sustainable economic growth, the government over the lats two decades, has been making significant strides in bringing into play mega power generation projects to meet the pressing demand for electricity.

In an exclusive interview with the Ethiopian Press Agency, Ethiopian Electric Power External Public Relation Director Misikir Negash said that the country's consecutive economic growth has built the nation's capacity and confidence in carrying out mega power generation projects by its own. The country has been undertaking the translation of mega projects into action earmarking a huge amount of money to scale up the supply of electricity much needed for the growing industry sector.

The growing industry and ongoing economic development put much demand on electric power. To meet the demand, the country has launched 8 power generation projects during the last decades, Misikir added.

According to the Director the country is striving to further boost its power supply by five folds as per of GTP II. The construction of hydro-power dams and power distribution station projects has proceeded apace. Works in Gibe III are being undertaken round-the-clock to herald power generation by the end of this year. The construction work is almost 90.28 per cent through. The construction phase of Genale Dawa III project has hit the 71.83 per cent mark. The dam will have the capacity of 254 MW.

The Adama II Wind Farm Project is due to reach the 93 per cent mark with the previously installed turbines currently generating up to 45 MW per minute each. The construction of the GERD has also reached 42.54 per cent. When the envisaged dams see completion, the country will have adequate power supply for the industry sector.

Besides, the government is trying to ensure fair and equitable power distribution through its rural electrification programmes. Around 5300 urban and rural kebelles are now connected to the grid. The country has also manged to produce and supply 80 per cent of construction materials need for the mega projects avoiding importing costs. The coverage of electricity has also reached 55 per cent.

Through the power development projects, an average of 50,000 job opportunities have been created so far.

Having identified the source of power disruption in some areas, the government is making extensive efforts through different mechanism to address the disruptions.

Hailing the contribution of the public in realizing the mega projects, the Director called up on the people to press ahead backing up the construction of mega dams including GERD.

Ethiopia: Renewable Energy Sector Integrating Academic Institutions With Dev't Organizations | May 19 | ETHIOPIAN HERALD

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505190907.html

By Abebe Wolde-Giorgis

The expansion of renewable wind powered generation in addition to supplying power to the grid, could create opportunities for scientific endeavours to local universities engaged in scientific and technological researches.

At the opening ceremony of the commencement of Adama II Wind Power Generation, Prime Minister Hailemariam Desallegn yesterday said that, scientific researchers from Adama and Mekele Universities delivered their responsibilities on electro-mechanical consultation work for the realization of the Adama II Wind Farm which is to produce 153 mega watt of power.

He further noted that, as the nation strides for development, research institutions cannot afford to do things with the business as usual attitude; rather they must fully engage on research that underpin development and the Farm can be taken as an eye opening project.

According to Hailemariam, the Adama Wind Project could be taken as the tip of the iceberg in indicating how theory can be transformed in to practice for graduate and under graduate students and how such practice must continue to be sustained. Until now, hundreds of students from higher learning institutions are working as practitioners and consultants.

The Ethiopian Electric Power (EEP) Chief Executive Officer Eng. Azeb Asnake on her part said that, due to the economic growth and the change in the way citizens live these days, the national demand for energy has been increasing by an annual average of 20 per cent; and to meet such rising demand EEP will have to work relentlessly.

She further said that, the power generated from the Adama II Wind Farm will go to the main grid and support development efforts by supplying power for manufacturing industries flourishing around Adama, Mojo and Debrezeit towns.

However, she did not deny that, importing and transporting from the Port of Djibouti huge power generation engines by trucks has been very cumbersome. Hence assembling engines locally must be seen as an alternative to over come the problem.

The total cost of the Adama II Wind Farm is 243 million USD of which 85 per cent came from China in the form of a loan while the rest is covered by the Ethiopian government. The construction is done by the Hydro China Global Company whereas the consultancy work was done by Adama and Mekelle Universities.

Ghana: CIF Lauds Ghana's Renewable Energy Plan | May 19 | GHANAIAN CHRONICLE

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505191689.html

By Masahudu Ankiilu Kunateh

The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) unanimously endorsed Ghana's ambitious investment plan to transform and promote its renewable energy sector.

The plan, which is slated to receive $40 million in funding from the CIF's Programme for Scaling Up Renewable Energy in Low Income Countries (SREP), is structured around four key projects: renewable energy mini-grids and stand-alone solar PV systems; solar PV-based net metering with storage; utility-scale solar PV/wind power generation; and a technical assistance project (supported by the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa - SEFA).

With a significant number of its citizens without access to basic electricity, Ghana is committed to drawing on its wealth of renewable resources to build a sustainable energy sector, and has already adopted a set of energy policy targets, including providing universal access to electricity by 2016, and achieving a 10% contribution of renewables in the electricity generation mix by 2020.

However, today, its renewables sector faces challenges, including inadequate regulatory, contractual and tariff frameworks, and limited interest from investors.

The infusion of SREP funding, along with $53.5 million in support from the African Development Bank (AfDB), and financing from other development partners, will help the country scale up and leverage private and public financial resources to build the country's renewables sector, and carry out the innovative set of projects.

"We are very pleased to receive this important endorsement from SREP," stated the Deputy Minister of Power, John Jinapor, who led the country's delegation to the CIF's governing body meetings recently.

"The potential we see through this plan for scaling-up the country's renewable energy development is enormous, not only because of the funding to be provided, but because it will help increase investor confidence, reduce regulatory, institutional and contractual barriers, and provide needed technical support and capacity, and ultimately, help Ghana's citizens to sustainably access climate-friendly energy."

The SREP investment plan is Ghana's second investment plan under the CIF. The country also has an active portfolio under the CIF's Forest Investment Program (FIP) - one of a handful of countries with plans in several sectors - and the SREP decision allows the country to exponentially expand its landscape of climate-smart development overall.

Ghana: Plant Reopens to Improve Ghana Power Supply | May 04 | CAJ NEWS

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505051331.html

By Masahudu Kunateh

Accra — GHANA'S power problems are set to ease after the completion of requisite work at the Atuabo Gas Processing Plant.

The facility had been shut down for maintenance.

The plant, managed by Ghana National Gas Company, has resumed processing, production and supply of various gas products following re-introduction of raw natural gas from the Jubilee Field's FPSO Kwame Nkrumah.

Subsequent supply to the downstream off-takers has begun.

Ghana Gas is collaborating with the Volta River Authority to manage the transition to full production within the coming days as the VRA progressively increases its offtake of processed lean gas for power production in the Aboadze Thermal Power enclave.

In a statement, the Board and Management of Ghana Gas commended its plant engineers and other stakeholders for their diligence and commitment to duty in completing the works ahead of schedule.

Kenya: Kenya Power Wants Local Materials for Major Project | May 4 | THE STAR

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505040662.html

Kenya Power wants to reduce the number of imported items it uses for power infrastructure, calling on local manufacturers to tender for supply of materials for the Last Mile Connectivity project.

The project which is estimated to cost $160 million(Sh15.1 billion) aims at connecting 284,200 residential and 30,000 commercial customers to the country's electricity network. The Kenyan government is expected to contribute $14 million(Sh1.32 billion) while the rest will be funded through a loan from African Development bank.

Kenya Power announced that the government has already received the funds from AfDB signaling start of the project which will require materials such as power transformers, electric cables, metering solutions, insulators and electricity management systems and accessories such as cut-outs, fuses and circuit breakers.

"In support of the government's 'Buy Kenya Build Kenya' plan Kenya Power now procures its electricity poles (wooden and concrete) locally. It is a departure from the past when most of these were procured from such countries as South Africa and Tanzania," said Kenya Power MD Ben Chumo.

"This move has seen over 40 local companies get involved in the treatment of wooden poles and production of concrete poles."

Kenya: Cost of Connecting Power Now Sh15,000 | May 28 | THE STAR

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505280085.html

By Jibril Adan

The cost of installing electricity has dropped from Sh35,000 to Sh15,000, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced yesterday.

This is expected to speed up the government's agenda to have at least 70 per cent of Kenyan households connected to electricity by 2017.

"We have asked Kenya Power to allow those who cannot pay at once to be connected and they can pay the tariff in instalments through their bills," Uhuru said.

Currently, 35 per cent of Kenyan households are connected to electricity.

He made the announcement in Machakos county when he officially launched the Last Mile Connectivity Project and commissioned the National Schools Electrification Project.

The President spoke at Katulu Primary School where the two events were held.

Uhuru said the decision to reduce the cost of installation was reached after the progress the government has achieved in increasing power generation.

He announced more measures to increase access to electricity to boost the economy and improve Kenyans' standard of living.

The Last Mile Connectivity Project also comes with a change of approach at how electricity connections are done.

Whereas Kenyans used to make applications with long procedures in the past, now Kenya Power and the Rural Electrification Authority will come knocking on doors asking Kenyans to allow them to connect their households to electricity.

The agencies will ensure that all households near electricity transformers are connected to power whether the owners have made applications or not.

To increase connectivity, when a resident from a certain area makes a request to be connected, that single application will serve as a basis to install electricity in all neighbouring homes.

The Energy ministry has also come up with designs that will enable homes that do not have internal wiring to use electricity by providing a 'ready board'.

The board has switches, sockets and bulb holders.

The plan also includes increasing the number of transformers all over the country.

"Everything we do is aimed at making Kenyans become busy with work, more productive and wealthier," Uhuru said.

On the school's electrification project, the President said all schools will be connected to electricity by next year.

All the 84 primary schools in Matungulu constituency are connected to electricity.

KenyaL ERC Targets Lowering Domestic Electricity Waste |May 22 | THE STAR

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505220822.html

By Martin Mwita

MANUFACTURES of electrical equipments for the Kenyan market will soon have to comply with new energy saving regulations or be locked out.

This is under the Energy Regulatory Authority's draft Appliances' Energy Performance and Labeling Regulations 2014.

ERC director general Joseph Ng'ang'a yesterday said the draft is awaiting official publication in the Kenya Gazette.

"In a very short while we will have regulations where we will be able to label appliances we use in the houses. When you are buying a fridge for use, you can be able to look for one that has a more efficient use so that you can save on your power bills,' said Ng'ang'a.

He was speaking in Nairobi during the awarding of an energy compliance certificate to British American Tobacco.

He said Kenya wastes up to 30 per cent of its energy annually in households ,which include kitchens, lighting and other home appliances.

According to ERC, the regulations will facilitate efficient use of energy through minimum energy performance standards.

Kenya: Solar Panels for Trees? Kenya Barters to Rebuild Its Forests | April 29 | THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201504300680.html

By Kathryn Werntz

Nyeri — In an effort to reverse tree losses in the Nyeri Forest, an environmental initiative has turned to an unusual barter system, offering chickens, goats or solar panels in exchange for tree planting.

"It is a win-win situation," said Joram Mathenge, director of the Kiangure Springs Environmental Initiative (KSEI), based in central Kenya's lush highlands.

Nyeri County, known for its tea and coffee production, is home to the late Nobel Peace Prize winner and environmentalist Wangari Maathai. It has the highest tree cover in Kenya - but its forests are dwindling as a result of human encroachment, some of it driven by climate change pressures on agriculture and water.

That loss of forest is problematic for more than Nyeri County itself. The forested hills are a vital water catchment that supplies neighbouring regions, and as the trees disappear erosion worsens, rainfall decreases and water supplies dry up.

Increasingly irregular rainfall attributed to climate change has led to crop failure, driving farmers to cut down trees for income and to graze their animals in the forest. Trees damaged by animals are particularly vulnerable to falling in strengthening flash floods, experts say.

To replenish Nyeri County's forests and protect its water catchment, two innovative programmes have turned to bartering. The programmes offer residents a "gift" in exchange for their help in the reforestation effort.

KSEI's reforestation programme lets people choose from chickens, goats or subsidized energy technology - biogas systems, solar energy packs or efficient cookstoves. In exchange, recipients agree to plant 5,000 trees a year and look after them until they are strong saplings.

"That may sound like a lot of work," Mathenge said, "but the people know that the time saved cutting firewood (efficient cookstoves generally cut firewood use by 50 percent) and the increase in income from having chickens or goats is well worth it."

Peter Thaithi, one barter participant, said the programme has helped more than just his small holding, which now includes cows, goats, a solar panel, a cookstove and rainwater harvesting equipment.

"Every time a tree is planted, I know the entire community benefits," he said, smiling.

TREES FOR TENURE

Another barter system in the area offers a different kind of trade-off: Tree planting for longer tenure on the land.

When rivers in the region began to run dry two decades ago, some residents of Nyeri County took a government handout of cleared forest land parcels, which had a better water supply.

The problem is the parcels were taken - and then given out - in what may have been irregular deals, Mathenge said.

The Kenyan government has now devised a scheme to recapture these lands, which are key to protecting the water catchment.

Farmers are allowed to stay on the land temporarily, continuing to farm as long as they plant and look after tree saplings. Once the saplings reach maturity and begin to shade the farmers' crops, the farmer must leave.

"Instead of chasing them out with a whip, they instead push people off the land slowly and in a sustainable way," Mathenge jokingly explained.

"In the past, people would be pushed off the land for reforestation. At night, they would rip up the saplings and destroy their roots," Mathenge said.

Now that problem is disappearing, he said, as farmers gain a better understanding of the value of tree cover.

Reforestation programmes in the area also have cut forest losses by harnessing an unusual ally: HIV-positive people in the region.

Nyeri County suffers from a moderately high HIV prevalence rate, which UNAIDS estimates at 3 percent. That status can drive deforestation, Mathenge and other environmentalists said.

"First, we've noticed that people who are HIV positive often resort to cutting down the trees in desperation to pay for the anti-retroviral drugs which are not always free," Mathenge explained. "And perhaps they need money for food with higher nutrition, (which is) important to living a healthy life with HIV."

"Further, HIV infection rates are highest among people in exactly the same age bracket from which we need people to be economically productive and contributing to the work of environmental conservation," Mathenge said.

As a result, "we work with HIV-positive people and AIDS orphans," he said. "We must have a healthy community to have a healthy environment."

- Reporting by Kathryn Werntz; editing by Laurie Goering

Kenya: UNEP to Establish Geothermal Centre of Excellence in Kenya | May 20 | CAPITAL FM

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505210268.html

By Judie Kaberia

Nairobi — The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is considering establishing an African regional geothermal hub in Kenya to be used as a centre of excellence for the rest of the world.

Speaking during a panel on renewable energy during the German Week, UNEP Program Manager ARGeo Dr Meseret Zemedkun said Kenya was successfully embracing renewable energy sources making it an exemplary country in the use of geothermal power in Africa and the West.

"We are considering Kenya as the main hub of the African region in terms of capacity building of geothermal technology. This is also the main achievement because they have built a very good experience and capacity. They can share their best practices with the rest of the world," she said.

The government's commitment in supporting geothermal technology is also demonstrated in the sound national scale of the budget allocated to the project as observed by Dr Zemedkun.

"It is really not common in any other African country. You can see the government is committed and allocates the funds for geothermal resources," she said.

UNEP further observed that Kenya has developed a coherent geothermal policy anchored on the geothermal act which strengthens public and private partnership in developing the renewable energy power project.

According to her, the government's financial support, public private-partnership and legal framework of geothermal technology are exemplary approaches that the rest of the world can emulate to implement the technology in their countries especially in Africa.

"Kenya is successful not only in Africa but even for the whole world. The way we see now, the trend, the commitment of the government, we can see that Kenya will reach and will also be one of the countries in the world to use geothermal for power generation," she asserted.

Through the project, Kenya also aims to use geothermal power for direct use application which will boost green house emissions and use of renewable energy like developed countries.

Kenya currently relies on hydro energy which according to experts has almost been exhausted yet majority of population have no access to power.

Affordable Power

During the discussions, the government announced that Kenya intends to produce 5,000 megawatts by 2017.

Head of Alternative Energy Technologies Division, Ministry of Energy, Benson Mlambo told Capital FM News that the government will next week launch the 'last mile connectivity plan' intended to connect more Kenyans to power.

The five year plan will ensure 80 percent of Kenyans have access to power compared to the only 35 percent currently connected.

The plan further seeks to make the cost of power more affordable and accessible also to rural parts of Kenya.

The government further announced its bid to rely on alternative power sources that are more environment friendly and efficient.

Liberia: After Ebola, Liberia's Mt. Coffee Rehab Set to Commence | May 27 | FRONTPAGEAFRICA

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505271264.html

Recent reports suggest that the Liberian government is looking after their interests related to their major development goals, making sure that their priority investments are properly managed and moved forward, with the following "Press Release" being publicized in the international media on 14th May, 2015: High-level visit to Voith: Liberian Energy Minister gets information about hydropower technology.

Last Thursday, Liberian Energy Minister Patrick Sendolo visited the technology group Voith to find out about the company's hydropower offering. In the process, the Minister also learned more about the status of the Mount Coffee modernisation, which is currently Liberia's only hydropower project. "I am delighted to have the opportunity to get my own impression of current activities on the Mount Coffee hydropower project. Following the modernisation, the power plant will supply more than a million people in Liberia with clean electricity from renewable resources," said Energy Minister Sendolo during the visit.

The high-ranking visitor was received by Christer Parkegren, CEO of Voith Hydro Heidenheim. "Over recent years, Liberia has suffered considerable setbacks due to civil war and the Ebola crisis. So we are all the more delighted to be able to make a major contribution to the country's economic development," said Christer Parkegren. "Following the Ebola epidemic, we are now getting ready to resume on-site work on the Mount Coffee project and are in close consultation with the Liberian Government in this regard," adds Parkegren. Start-up of the modernized Mount Coffee hydropower plant is scheduled for the end of 2016.

For the project in Liberia, Voith Hydro is modernizing the Francis turbines and supplying new generators, the control technology and the electrical and mechanical power plant equipment, which will increase capacity by

a third. In addition, Voith is currently implementing various projects in Africa, including the supply of equipment for the Cambambe II hydropower plant in Angola and modernizing the Inga I hydropower plant in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All in all, Voith can look back on many years of involvement on the African continent. Although there is considerable hydropower potential in Africa, estimated at around 300 Gigawatts, only around 26 Gigawatts of this potential is actually being utilized at present.

On the importance of hydropower

Hydropower is the largest, oldest and most reliable form of renewable energy generation. Worldwide it makes an indispensable contribution to a stable power supply and thus to economic and social development - in industrialized countries and also in regions seeing strong growth. In addition, hydropower contributes significantly to climate-friendly energy production. Since the early days of hydropower exploitation Voith has been a leading supplier of this technology and is constantly developing it further.

From a historic perspective:

The Mt Coffee Hydro Electric project, first developed in the late 196o'ies, to be the "back bone" in the Liberian energy production, the entire history is not quite clear with regards to why the present site of Mt Coffee, actually was selected for this very much important project. The main reason for having said that is the fact that Mt Coffee was designed and built as a "run of the river" power station, this meaning that the installation had no or very much limited storage capacity for the huge influx of water during the "rain season" and more or less no water during the "dry season".

The result being that during the rains, more or less 60 % of the water reaching the power station was directly wasted thru the way of the "spill ways", and actually thereby by-passing the turbines that produce the energy to generate electricity. As a result of this the "dry season" part of the year always experience a lack of energy, energy that needed to be supplied from other means of energy production sources to meet the Liberian overall demand. Diesel and Heavy fuel oil powered power stations were developed, to make up for the dry season short coming in energy production from Mt Coffee, with at time only one (1) or at time not even one (1) turbine being able to run and produce energy to the grid, due to the fact that the water level did not allow for the safe running of the station.

The energy production from fossil fuels like diesel and heavy fuel oil (HFO), was of course quite costly, with all fuel being imported to Liberia, with complete dependency to the selected suppliers and the general vulnerability to the global price fluctuation and availability of these products. In addition energy production from these fossil fuel powered power station, is done by the use of engines similar to what is used for large size ships and marine vessels, such machines need parts and maintenance to enable operation. This kind of operation require a very good management of the resources and maybe most important that the energy produced is indeed paid being for, as else the 'cash flow" will rapidly go negative and the adequate operational procedures simply can't be maintained.

This is also what actually happened in the past, with the overall revenue from energy sales only accounted for about 30 % or less of what was actually being produced, meaning that the fuel, spare / replacement parts and technical services, simply could not be paid for and the end result of course being that the power stations were ended up to be mismanaged and destroyed, already within quite limited operational hours.

The advantage of hydro electric energy production is the fact that the water is actually more or less a free source of energy, the investment in establishing these facilities of course comes with a quite huge amount of funding being required initially, but then thereafter, with a minimum of maintenance and a relatively long life span for the installation. This being quite different from fossil fuel power stations that will require regular maintenance and fuel, lubricant and spare parts (all being imported and need to be paid for) for their entire life span a life span that is at best 15 -20% of that of a hydro-electric installation.

So let's learn from the past not to repeat the earlier mistakes and make sure that the Liberian hydro- electric potential is now being properly managed and developed, this to secure the Liberian long term energy

requirements and also to potentially enable energy sales to the neighboring countries in West Africa. The Liberian hydro power potential is estimated to be around 1000 -1500 MW, if all already mapped out and partially studied site are being developed, this is a huge amount of energy for a country of the size of Liberia. The present overall energy demand maybe require 200 -300 MW, if the transmission and distribution systems were built and developed to actually allow transfer of that amount of energy all around the perimeters of Liberia.

We are of course right now far away from having a transmission and distribution system that can facilitate such energy transfer, but some recent indications are suggesting that this might change rather sooner than later. The WAPP Project looking at the inter connection of the West African power grid is gaining momentum and will soon reach the tendering stage for the actual works to begin to build these transmission lines, that will connect Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone with the rest of the eastern parts of West Africa through power lines already being available in Ivory Coast, such power lines being constructed already some time back to reach quite close to the Liberian border.

With this inter- connection transmission line in place, the Liberian hydro-electric potential will then of course become available to the entire region being connected to this power grid, something that of course should make it easier to attract investments to develop such hydro-electric potential fully out for the benefit of all countries being connected. This would in turn if this indeed would happen also become a source of income for Liberia as long as they can produce more energy than what is actually internally consumed. Hydro Electric power production is a clean and renewable means of energy production and very much in line with the global efforts to reduce the co2 emissions and thereby also long term to contribute to a overall cleaner and more healthy environment worldwide.

About the company being awarded the Mt Coffee Electro / Mechanical contract:

Voith sets standards in the energy, oil & gas, paper, raw materials and transport & automotive markets. Founded in 1867, Voith today has more than 39,000 employees and earns 5.3 billion euros in sales. It has locations in over 50 countries in all regions of the world and is one of the largest family-owned companies in Europe.

In addition, Voith is currently implementing various projects in Africa, including the supply of equipment for the Cambambe II hydropower plant in Angola and modernising the Inga I hydropower plant in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All in all, Voith can look back on many years of involvement on the African continent. Although there is considerable hydropower potential in Africa, estimated at around 300 Gigawatts, only around 26 Gigawatts of this potential is actually being utilized at present.

Liberia: JICA to Resume Work On LEC Plant | May 19 | LINA

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505210725.html

Acting Japanese Foreign Minister B. Elias Shoniyin has disclosed a request from Liberia to consider the return of contractors to resume work on the 10 megawatt power plant for the Liberia Electricity Corporation (LEC).

Minister Shoniyin made the statement when Liberia and Japan signed on Monday, May 18, in Monrovia a Non-Project Grant Aid valued at US$4.2 million for economic and social development.

According to a release from the Foreign Ministry, it was also revealed that the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will resume work officially next month in Liberia.

Japanese contractors working on the Somalia Drive and the 10 megawatt energy station are also expected to resume work after a ceremony to be held in June at the Ministry of Public Works where JICA has its offices, the release noted.

Japanese technicians and JICA staff left the country last year in the wake of the Ebola virus outbreak.

With the declaration of Liberia as Ebola-free by the World Health Organization, many expatriates who left the country are now returning to resume activities.

Nigeria: Nigeria's First 10 Megawatt Katsina Windfarm Nears Completion | May 12 | THIS DAY

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505121375.html

By Chineme Okafor

Abuja — Nigeria's first ever wind farm, the 10 megawatts (MW) Katsina windfarm is a couple of fractions of work from being completed and commissioned, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Power, Godknows Igali has said.

Igali said in a statement that the 10MW Katsina wind farm has achieved about 98 per cent completion with its 37 turbines currently being test-run and five already successfully test-run.

He also said the transmission line for the evacuation of the electricity that would be generated from the farm has ready been completed through the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), adding that TCN has confirmed this development.

Although, the timeline for completion of the windfarm has consistently shifted from 2012, the windfarm situated in a small village of ,Rimi, which is 25 kilometres (km) south of Katsina City is part of Nigeria's attempt at tapping into her alternative natural sources of electricity generation.

The project was first envisioned by the Katsina State government but it gained full support from the federal government, through the ministry of power in its quest to diversify Nigeria's energy mix, boost electricity generation and have constant power supply.

Contract for the project which is also funded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and will exploit the vast wind resources in the north of Nigeria was awarded to French company Vergnet S.A, a certified wind turbine manufacturer, while Nigerian company, O.T. Otis Engineering and German firm, Terrawatt were jointly hired as consultant to supervise the project.

At 55 metres, the average annual mean monthly wind speed for Katsina has been calculated as 6.044 m/s and it is through this that the farm is expected to generate electricity with its 37 wind turbines which have rated power of 275 kW each.

Igali however disclosed that the government is committed to ensuring smooth running of this pilot scheme and it plans to replicate it in the entire northern region of the country where wind velocity is high.

He however stressed that harnessing of wind resource is an integral part of the newly approved national policy on sustainable energy and energy efficiency, adding that the delay experienced in the completion of the Katsina windfarm was occasioned by the ugly incident of kidnapping of a French national who was in-charge of the project and the need to subsequently engage another French company to complete the project.

He explained that the wind-farm was only one component of the renewable energy programme of the federal government and will get further boost with the approval by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) of the policy on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Nigeria: Nigeria's Power Generation Drops to 2,800 Megawatts | May 1 | PREMIUM TIMES

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505011107.html

Nigeria's total electricity generation has dropped to a meagre 2,800 Megawatts, the lowest in nearly a year, as Nigerians struggle with mini-heat waves due to rising temperature.

The Ministry of Power said Thursday that power output dropped from a recent peak of 4,500MW on April 3, to 2,800 as of March 30.

Godknows Igali, the Permanent Secretary in the ministry blamed the huge cut on "vandalism of gas pipelines".

Mr. Igali spoke at a meeting with the Commandant General of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), Ade Abolurin, where he called for increased protection of Nigeria's power infrastructure.

He said the affected pipeline is the Escravos route.

"As at April 3, which is the nearest reference point for us, we were able to generate about 4,500MW on the grid, but as at this morning we had gone down to about 2,800MW.

"So you can see how much power we have lost as a result of vandalism, that is why power supply has become very bad all over the country because of these strange Nigerians that continue to deliberately blow up our gas pipelines," Mr. Igali said.

All Nigerian cities, including the capital Abuja and Lagos, have witnessed one of the worst electricity supplies in recent years, with power available for less than five hours a day in many areas.

The supply has dropped even more in the last weeks as many Nigerians struggle with rising temperatures.

The permanent secretary decried the activities of the vandals and described their action as national economic sabotage.

He said the ministry of power was working more closely with the security agencies, especially the NSCDC to adequately protect power infrastructure across the country.

Mr. Igali said the damaged pipelines were being repaired to boost power generation and distribution across the country.

Earlier, the Civil Defence boss, Mr. Abolurin, who strongly condemned the activities of the vandals, said personnel were working to curtail the menace of pipeline vandalism in the country.

He said the NSCDC had acquired more vehicles, boats and gadgets to aid its operations, especially in the Niger Delta region.

Mr. Abolurin said in 2015, about 50 culprits have already been convicted by the law courts while several others had been arrested and awaiting prosecution.

He said the NSCDC would not relent in his effort to ensure adequate security and protection of critical power infrastructure across the country in line with its mandate.

The NSCDC chief also appealed to the private investors operating the power infrastructure to make their own provisions for security to compliment government's effort.

NAN

Nigeria: FG Battles to Re-Start Grid, As Electricity Blackout Continues | May 27 | DAILY TRUST

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505271433.html

By Hamisu Muhammad And Simon Echewofun Sunday

A team of engineers are still battling to re-start the National Electricity Grid at the Control Centre in Osogbo, Osun State after a near short down on Monday.

A source in the power sector says that this is the first time that the grid has been down for more than 24 hours and efforts to bring it back on stream was ongoing as at press time yesterday.

The source claims that sabotage may be responsible for the system collapse which has plunged Nigeria into one of its worst power outages.

He did not however provide details on why sabotage may be responsible for the collapse of the grid which had also occurred in the past.

But Daily Trust leant that following the call-off of the oil and gas workers strike, Monday evening electricity Generation companies (Gencos) are gradually improving the generation of electricity to revamp the grid.

Statistics from the Presidential Taskforce on Power (PTFP), on Monday, showed that power generation has dropped to a historic 172megawatts (mw) peak generation with only 46mw energy sent out.

That was the lowest ever in a period over 10 years in the country.

An official in the ministry of power, who spoke under the condition of anonymity, said about 120mw of the grid capacity was kept as spinning reserve to avert the collapse of the system.

Yet, one of the Generation companies (Gencos), the Kainji/Jebba hydropower plant in Niger State, has collapsed with engineers still trying to resuscitate it.

Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) supplying power to the three states of Kogi, Niger and Nasarawa and the nation's capital, Abuja, said the system collapse resulted in a cut in its daily allocation from 200mw, recently, to 15mw.

Confirming an improvement in the situation, Ahmed Shekarau, the public affairs manager of the distribution company (Disco), said the allocation has improved by 85mw, Tuesday evening.

He said: "Good news. The AEDC allocation has now been increased to 100mw."

The Chief Executive Officer of Shiroro Genco, Engr. Daudu Abdulazeez, also confirmed the operation of the plant, saying: "Our plant is operating as it didn't breakdown but I think the 9:00pm news in NTA will still talk about it."

The Managing Director of Ughelli Genco, Mr Adeoye Fadeyi, speaking on telephone with Daily Trust, said that the plant was ramping up on power generation.

He said: "We are going over 200mw now. We are already generating power supply and are wrapping up on that."

The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), while appealing for calm, said that 18, out of the 23 power plants, remained shut till Monday, when the oil and gas workers strike was called off.

The consumers of the Jos Disco covering Benue, Plateau, Gombe and Bauchi states, however, remained in darkness as the chairman of the Disco, Muhammad Modibbo, said the Disco only got 10mw allocation yesterday.

He said: "We are yet to get good allocation. We only got 10mw allocation as at 4:25pm this (Tuesday) evening."

In the meantime, the Public Affairs Manager of the Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN), Mrs Seun Olagunju, has said that the system will turn up only when power ramps to about 1,500mw.

She said: "It is actually nobody's fault. We had to shut down the system to prevent it from collapse. The system cannot just come up like a switch because it takes some time, like when it reaches 1,500mw."

Nigeria: Jonathan Signs Contentious Bill to Double Power Sector Watchdogs | May 29 | THIS DAY

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505290033.html

By Chineme Okafor

Abuja — President Goodluck Jonathan has finally appended his signature on the controversial Nigerian Electricity Management Services Authority (NEMSA) bill to now make for two regulatory bodies controlling affairs in Nigeria's power sector.

The president at the twilight of his reign assented to the bill which now makes it an Act that primarily grants powers to NEMSA to provide technical regulations and inspections in Nigeria's nascent electricity market.

Minister of Power, Prof. Chinedu Nebo disclosed Wednesday in Abuja that Jonathan signed off the NEMSA Act on Tuesday. His assent on the bill may now break the regulatory control enjoyed by the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) as enshrined in Section 32 of the electricity reform act of 2005.

Section 32 of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act 2005 (EPSR) grants to NERC the sole regulatory responsibility in the country's electric industry, such role is further buttressed in Section 3.1.4.2 of the National Electric Power Policy (NEPP).

The NEMSA Act however appears to now break NERC's hold on technical regulation of the industry, a situation NERC resisted. Disclosing the news of the assent at a send forth dinner organised by the ministry, Nebo thanked stakeholders that supported the process, including the chair of the senate committee on power, Philip Aduda who with his House of Representatives colleague, Patrick Ikhariale provided the legislative backing for its passage at the parliament.

NEMSA had been controversial from onset. The new authority whose mandate is said to duplicate that of NERC and other agencies of government had attracted knocks and credits from stakeholders. Some argued that its introduction was necessary to check extant gaps in technical regulation of the electricity industry, while others insisted that its functions and operational mode were uncertain.

Meanwhile, Nebo also alleged that the reason why the outgoing administration missed out on its target of improved electricity generation was because of discovered preference by gas supplier to do business with other gas end-users ahead of the power sector. The minister noted that most times, gas producers preferred to meet the demands of other users like industries before looking the way of the power sector, a situation he explained was disheartening and thus made sure that power plants were commissioned without gas to power them.

He made reference to the recent strike and the near collapse of Nigeria's energy system vis-à-vis the economy, adding that it was a warning shot of what could happen to the country if it fails to squarely fix her entire energy security. "It has been a horrendous experience for me, and what pains me the more is the fact that we could do a lot better, but it is like the Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner, "water! water!! everywhere but not a drop to drink".

What I can say of Nigeria's power sector today is megawatt! megawatt!! everywhere but not one seen around, the fact is that the gas war has not been won and unless we win that war, we are still going to continue to have problems," said Nebo.

He further stated that: "The gas war comes in two forms; vandalism which has crippled us because we record a minimum of two breaks per month and when they attack it takes about three to 14 days to fix and by the time you finish, they blow up the pipeline again within 48 hours and we spend a minimum of N120 million every month repairing pipelines."

The minister explained: "Since I became minister in 2013, the gas company,-NGC has spent over N3 billion repairing the gas pipelines and these things were not budgeted for, we have not won that war.

The second aspect of the war is the discrimination against the power sector by the suppliers of gas. They do not give power priority and this is something that made us get the tariff raised for gas suppliers to see motivation in giving gas to the power sector. We must give preferential treatment to power because we now have installed capacity of 7000 megawatts (MW) constrained."

Nigeria: NERC, Consumers Plan Electricity Advocacy Network | April 30 | DAILY TRUST

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201504301154.html

By Simon Echewofun Sunday

The Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has unveiled a framework to create an electricity consumers' advocacy group in the electricity value chain.

The Chairman of NERC, Dr. Sam Amadi, who consulted with consumer advocacy groups in Abuja, yesterday, said the framework was necessary to bridge the gaps in knowledgeable, credible and broad-based advocates or advocacy groups for electricity consumers.

Tanzania: AfDB to Finance Power Sector Reforms | May 22 | DAILY NEWS

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505220441.html

The African Development Bank (AfDB) Board of Directors has approved more than 70 million US dollars (about 141bn/-) in a soft loan to finance the Tanzania Power Sector Reforms and Governance Support Programme (PSRGSP).

The objective of the proposed operation is to promote inclusive growth and enhanced economic competitiveness through the power sector, economic and financial governance reforms.

A statement issued in Dar es Salaam by the bank on Thursday said the loan agreement will be officially signed next week, at the margins of the AfDB's Annual Meetings at its Headquarters in Abidjan.

"By providing financial resources for the national budget for this fiscal year (2014/15), the loan will support the implementation of the government of Tanzania reform agenda.

"This operation is part of a US $140 million dollar loan in a three-year programmatic series (for 2014/15-2016/17). Subsequent operations of US $35 million dollars each will be prepared for 2015/16 and 2016/17 fiscal years," reads part of the statement.

By supporting Tanzania's reform agenda in the energy sector, the PSRGSP seeks to support the government of Tanzania's efforts to implement energy sector reforms. Areas of focus include strengthening the institutional framework and operational efficiency of the power sector and enhancing competition and private sector participation in the power sector.

It also aims at improving governance with particular emphasis on strengthening procurement systems and debt management to help reduce the fiscal risks posed by parastatals.

"Ensuring financial and operational sustainability, particularly in respect of Tanesco (the national power utility) is one of the hallmarks of the proposed operation, and the approach is twofold; support cost-cutting measures and revenue-enhancing measures", the statement said.

The PSRGSP operation is critical to improving the performance of Tanzania's power sector, with direct impact on improving access to electricity, maintaining macroeconomic stability, poverty alleviation, economic competitiveness and private sector development.

This operation is built on the previous Budget Support Operation of US $50 million dollars approved by the Board, in December, 2013, which among other objectives supported the development of the Electricity Supply Industry Reform Strategy and Roadmap.

Tanzania: REA Mulls Power to 1.2 Million Rural Residents By 2020 | May 25 | DAILY NEWS

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505250627.html

By Nelly Mtema

The Rural Energy Agency (REA) envisages supplying 1,250,000 rural dwellers with electricity in the next five years, thanks to about 900bn/- that the government has set aside to support the grand project.

REA Chairman Edmund Mkwawa, releasing the agency report on implementation of rural energy projects in Dar es Salaam over the weekend, said the massive rural electrification project started in October 2013 and it is progressing well.

The project involves construction of six stations to increase voltage to 11/33kv in Kigoma, Kasulu, Kibondo, Ngara, Mbiga and Tunduru for 13,600km of a distribution line for 11/33kv.

It will also cover some 7,000 of a distribution line for 0.4kv, installing of connecting transformers and connecting of some initial 250,000 customers when the contractors go through their areas.

He said the project will be conducted countrywide in 133 districts and it has in place the best infrastructure to meet over a million customers in the next five years.

"This will be one of the biggest rural electrification projects that has ever been put in place for sub-Saharan Africa," said Mr Mkwawa during a press conference in Dar es Salaam over the weekend.

He said to meet the intended goals they are well focused to ensure that the task is being made as planned and adding that as of June, this year - 9,752 customers will have power.

Much as the projects is meant to cater for all areas in the country, but special consideration will be for areas with the lowest electricity connections, especially Katavi, Rukwa, Mtwara, Lindi, Kigoma, Tabora and Kagera regions.

He added that as of December, last year, 5,434 villages, which is equal to 36 per cent of all villages in the country, were connected with electricity plans being by 2030 all villages will be having power.

Moreover, the REA Chair said that between 2010 and 2014 the authority offered matching grant worth 3.1 million US dollars for feasibility studies, business write-up and small hydropower projects with the capacity to generate 94 megawatts and having the capacity to connect 52,500 people in the project areas.

On the performance grant, Mr Mkwawa said that seven projects have benefitted, amongst them Mwenga, Mawengi and Andoya, which have enabled power connection to 4,600 customers.

REA and Sumbawanga District Council have coordinated sustainable solar market packages for 82 villages to serve dispensaries, secondary schools, health centres and police posts.

"The project is complete and for the time being, the authority is coordinating such projects for 452 villages in Biharamulo, Sikonge, Chato, Bukombe, Kasulu, Kibondo, Tunduru and Namtumbo municipalities," he said.

On top of that, the authority is offering credit line facility for renewable energy projects for Mufindi, Mbinga and Mafia districts whereas 5.43 million US dollars have been given to set up small power generation projects in the areas.

REA Director General Lutengano Mwakahesya said that 80 per cent of the projects are sponsored by the government. Hence, under the National Electrification Investment Prospectus 2013-2022, the electrification project will reach 75 per cent of the population from the current 36.

Tanzania: Tanesco Mulls More Renewable Energy Projects | May 25 | DAILY NEWS

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505250366.html

By Finnigan Wa Simbeye

Renewable energy remains the most reliable and sustainable for the future after current traditional energy sources such as coal, oil and natural gas are depleted, hence Tanesco's drawing up strategies to adopt them.

Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco) Managing Director, Engineer Felchem Mramba, said although renewable energy technology is currently expensive but the future remains in exploiting wind and solar.

"Traditional energy sources such as gas and coal will be depleted over time but wind and solar will always be there," Mr Mramba said after officiating at a World Bank sponsored Mapping of Solar and Wind Energy in Tanzania.

He pointed out that although currently the country has huge natural gas, thermal and other depleting energy sources, the future requires that the state owned utility invests in wind and solar energy.

"This exercise of mapping our renewable energy potential by World Bank is welcome because it helps us plan and strategise for the future," Tanesco Managing Director pointed out.

An average wind farm or solar panels plant with capacity of generating 300 megawatts costs between 500 million US dollars and 800 million US dollars.

The World Bank has already commissioned some of these projects in South Africa and Morocco. Mramba said with time and advanced technologies being introduced in a competitive global market, such costs will likely fall to levels where Tanesco will invest in renewable energy sources.

World Bank Senior Energy Specialist, Oliver Knight said Tanzania is one of the 12 countries in the world where World Bank through ESMAP can succeed in such a project.

"Preliminary results show that the whole of Tanzania has the potential of renewable energy such as wind and solar but the difference is that some places are excellent," Mr Knight noted, saying Phase I of the project only present computer generated estimates.

He said eight wind and solar stations will be placed countrywide where actual data on the two sources of energy will be collected over the next two years. "Only then will we have validated results which can be the basis for investment," pointed out Knight.

The World Bank expert further noted that renewable energy projects are only expensive at initial investment stages but later on costs are lower.

Under the ESMAP project, Tanzania has been allocated 3m US dollars to conclude data collection and site visits. The whole project is worth 22.5m US dollars and Tanzania is one of the single largest beneficiaries.

Established in 1983, the Energy Sector Management Assistance Programme (ESMAP) is a global, multidonor technical assistance trust fund administered by the World Bank and cosponsored by 13 official bilateral donors.

Tanzania: TANESCO Welcome Rivals in Power Distribution | May 26 | DAILY NEWS

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201505260336.html

PRIVATE sector is welcome to compete with state owned Tanzania Electric Supply Company (TANESCO) in both generation and distribution of electricity in the country.

Tanesco Director General, Felchesmi Mramba said in Dar es Salaam last week while officiating at a World Bank funded Mapping of solar and wind energy in Tanzania media briefing that the 2008 Electricity Act allows private investors to compete with the state power corporation in all areas.

"The law allows private players to compete against Tanesco in electricity field but unfortunately we have not seen any private sector participation in distribution so far," Mr Mramba said while responding to questions regarding Tanesco's monopoly in the electricity sector. He said earlier this decade, Artumas Energy tried to take over generation and distribution of electricity in Mtwara Region, but their attempted collapsed before a deal was reached.

"Artumas is the only private company which had seriously indicated to do both generation and distribution of electricity," he noted. Mramba said most private investors have participated in generation only for reasons best known by themselves because regulation allows such private participation as health.

"Private sector is more than welcome to compete with Tanesco in all areas of electricity production," pointed out Mramba. Artumas Energy (currently known as Wentworth Resources) failed to wean Lindi and Mtwara regions from Tanesco's monopoly in 2006/8 following global financial crisis which crippled the company's 7m US dollars Mtwara Energy Project.

The company signed an Interim Power Purchase Agreement (IPPA) with Tanesco in August 2006 to implement the MEP which in principle would have dismissed the state power company's presence in the two southern regions.

However Artumas was to still partners with Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation and Tanesco in implementing the MEP which was due to generate and distribute 12 megawatts of power by 2010 while another mega project to generate 300MW of power from natural gas was planned by 2015.

Tanesco MD also welcomed the private sector to participate investing in renewable energy especially wind and solar as the country has abundant potential in the field.

"Renewable energy resources are not cheap but environmentally friend and sustainable," Mramba argued. Presenting the initial renewable energy mapping report for the country, World Bank Senior Energy Specialists, Oliver Knight and Anders Pedersen said Tanzania is one of the 12 countries worldwide which are involved in Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) has allocated 22.5m US dollars (46.8bn/-).

"Tanzania is the only country in Africa with all the resource to generate renewable energy," said Mr Pedersen who pointed out that the country has been allocated the largest slice alongside Pakistan at 3m US dollars (6.2bn/-).

Pedersen said the private sector is welcome to invest in the three areas of small hydro, solar and wind which guarantee good returns in a sustainable way.

"The initial investment is huge but successive investments lower with development of modern technologies," the World Bank specialist noted. An average wind farm or solar panels plant with capacity of generating 300 megawatts costs between 500 million US dollars and 800 million US dollars.

The World Bank has already commissioned some of these projects in South Africa and Morocco. Giving details of the ESMAP implementation in the country, Mr Knight said the presented reports was simply initial computer simulated models and that Phase II will seek to validate such estimates.

"The results that we are presenting today are not validated results hence not justifiable for investment," he noted. During the next 24 months, 16 data stations will be located throughout the country to collect data for the three renewable energy sources as a process of validation.

Apart from Tanzania and Pakistan, other countries involved in the ESMAP project are Ethiopia, Lesotho, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Vietnam and Zambia. ESMAP is a global knowledge and technical assistance program administered by the World Bank.

It provides analytical and advisory services to low- and middle-income countries to increase their know-how and institutional capacity to achieve environmentally sustainable energy solutions for poverty reduction and economic growth.

ESMAP is funded by Australia, Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, as well as the World Bank.

ESMAP has currently allocated 22.5m US dollars to this initiative, which will run until at least 2018. Full delivery of the current pipeline of 12 country projects would require over 48m US dollars.